



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

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Media Release April 12, 2005

2005 Severe Weather Awareness Week is from April 18 through April 22

Showers and thunderstorms have already occurred across northeastern Montana this spring, although none have been severe, yet. Do you know what your threat of severe weather is? Looking back at 10 years worth of data, within the counties that the NOAA National Weather Service office in Glasgow, Montana issues warnings for, there have been 47 tornados in the region, with 856 reports of hail $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch or larger, and 463 reports of thunderstorm winds of 58 mph or higher. A breakdown of each county looks like this:

County	#Tornados	# Hail Events $\frac{3}{4}$ inch or greater	# Thunderstorm Wind Events 58 mph or higher	Reported Monetary Damages/Losses
Daniels	1	42	23	763K
Dawson	3	70	50	4.03M
Garfield	6	98	74	816K
McCone	3	77	48	3.26M
Petroleum	2	42	26	20K
Phillips	4	91	55	490K
Prairie	0	63	29	100K
Richland	2	62	52	375K
Roosevelt	6	72	64	505K
Sheridan	3	53	19	111K
Valley	16	146	5	3.54M
Wibaux	1	40	18	584K
Average per year	5	86	46	1.5M

The data from this table is from weather spotters, the general public, and emergency services personnel. We collect the damage estimates from newspaper articles, known insurance claims, and damage surveys that the National Weather Service conducts after significant thunderstorms. The reported monetary losses to property and especially crops are likely much higher than what is readily reported.

During Severe Weather Awareness Week, the National Weather Service wants to remind people that there are things that can be done that can prevent losses to your property. These things include tearing down or reinforcing structures that are not sound, and can be destroyed easily by high winds and tornados, trimming out dead tree branches, cleaning up/securing loose items around a home or a farm so that they do not become projectile objects.

Knowing how to protect yourself is the most important thing to remember when it comes to a severe thunderstorm or tornado. The best bet is to seek shelter in a sturdy, well constructed home, in a basement, or an interior hallway or closet. Too often people are hurt because they are watching the storm arrive, and suddenly debris flies in through the window.

If you are driving, and can not get to a sturdy shelter, you need to remain in the vehicle. If a tornado is approaching, and you can see where it is coming from, and where it is going, the best thing to do is to try and drive to the south, and then around to the southwest so that you are behind the storm. If you try and go north, you may end up in portion of the storm that contains the tornado, large hail and damaging winds.

Lastly, the National Weather Service does not issue warnings for lightning, but every strike that hits the ground could be a potential killer. If you see lightning, and the thunder follows within 30 seconds, go indoors immediately. Wait 30 minutes after a storm has passed to go back outside. The reason for this is that lightning can arc out of the back of the thunderstorm. The sky may be clear above you, but these “bolts from the blue” have been documented and can threaten your life, let alone your property.

If you would like to learn more about severe thunderstorms, and weather safety, the National Weather Service in Glasgow will hold free presentations at the following locations this spring:

Richey: April 14th at the Senior Center at 6 pm

Lindsay: April 19th at the Community Hall at 630 pm

Glasgow: April 21 at the Cottonwood Inn at 6 pm

Plentywood: April 25th in the Jubilee Room at the Courthouse at 7 pm

Winnett: April 26th in the library basement on April 26 at 6 pm

Glendive: April 28th at the Senior Center at 7 pm

Culbertson: May 2 at 6 p.m. (location TBD)

Medicine Lake: May 5 at the Fire Hall at 7 pm

Wibaux: May 11 at 6-8 pm at the Fire Hall

Poplar: May 18 at the Greet the Dawn center at 6 pm

Wolf Point: May 19 at the new county building facility at 6 pm

Circle: May 23 at 6 pm at the School